

Inspection report for Children's Home

Unique reference number	SC386502
Inspection date	23/02/2011
Inspector	Anthony Kyem
Type of inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	07/07/2010
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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is a detached house, domestic in character and situated in a busy residential area. The home is registered for three children and young people between the ages of 10 years and 17 years of age. As well as long stay placements, the service also provides one respite care place.

The location of the home provides good access to a wide range of community facilities. Young people have their own bedroom and access to a good standard of communal space and outdoor gardens and equipment.

Young people, staff and the home's manager were all present and contributed towards this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

This was a full unannounced key inspection. The visit was undertaken to assess the home's performance in meeting the outcome areas for being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation.

The home is a good service with outstanding features. Young people are extremely well cared for and supported. They receive excellent levels of support, which enables them to thrive and make extensive progress. Young people are provided with high quality living accommodation where their safety and security is promoted. Staff are exceptionally supportive of young people's needs and they treat young people as valued individuals.

One young person says 'It's like a real home. I like the other kids and staff are generally really good people to be around. There's a nice family environment. We're one big family in this house... Out of five stars I would give this home four and a half out of five, as there's always room for improvement.'

Feedback from placing authorities and neighbours is also positive. 'I am really pleased with the progress child X has made in your care and I am sure he will now have a better outcome in life.'

'I would just like you to know how much child X has come on over the past year. He is a credit to you all. It is so noticeable. Keep up the good work.'

As a result of this inspection there are two recommendations made in relation to managerial monitoring and the recording of staff personnel records.

Improvements since the last inspection

There are no actions or recommendations resulting from the previous inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young people receive a well balanced diet in accordance with their individual needs and wishes. They are consulted about their food preferences and are actively involved in the planning of the menu. Young people are able to assist staff with the cooking and preparation of meals. Foods consumed by young people are monitored and staff offer good advice and support on healthy eating.

Young people's good health and well-being is actively promoted. Staff ensure that young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and they identify specialist support for those young people, whom require it. This enables young people to receive specialist care, in accordance with their needs. Staff actively encourage young people to lead a healthy lifestyle and they provide good advice and support on health related issues.

There are sufficient numbers of staff trained to administer first aid, and staff administer young people's medication safely. There are safe working practices followed in practice, in respect of medication. Medication used by young people is securely stored by staff, to promote their welfare and safety.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff respect young people's privacy. Information kept about young people is stored and treated confidentiality. Young people are provided with their own bedrooms and washing facilities for their privacy and dignity.

No complaints were raised by young people during this visit, and none have been recorded since the previous inspection. Young people spoken too felt they had a good understanding of the home's complaints procedure and they felt able, to report any issues or concerns to staff. There was evidence available to show that young people have access to advocates and legal representation, where required. This ensures that young people's rights are promoted effectively.

There are no concerns with young people placing themselves at risk of significant harm. There are no issues with safeguarding or bullying. Young people spoken too confirmed that bullying was not an issue for them. Staff are vigilant towards bullying which enables them to address any identified issues early. Harmonious relationships are actively encouraged and relationships between young people and staff, are exceptionally positive.

Young people's needs are carefully assessed and identified risks are recorded clearly. Young people are provided with individual behaviour management plans, which enable staff to work safely. There are no issues with young people absenting themselves without authority. There has been one reported occurrence, since the previous inspection.

Young people are actively encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour is challenged appropriately and sanctions used by staff, are fair. Physical intervention is only ever used as a last resort, to protect young people from harm. Staff are trained in the use of care and control and they manage young people's behaviours safely.

Health and safety systems are managed well. There are effective systems in place for the detection and prevention of fire. There are regular fire drills and safety tests undertaken to the home's fire safety equipment, gas and portable electrical appliances. Health and safety is effectively promoted.

Staff are appropriately vetted to assess their suitability to provide care for children and young people. This includes enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks and appropriate employment references. Staff's personnel records are kept at a regional office and duplicate records are kept within the home. However, these do not include all of the information specified within regulation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Care is provided for young people, in an exceptionally positive way. Every young person's needs are effectively addressed as, an individual. Young people receive unconditional support and this includes, one-to-one support, therapeutic support and planned key working activities. Young people receive extensive support in accordance with their individual needs and wishes.

The relationships between young people and staff are outstanding and these are built on trust and mutual respect. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the young people they work with, which enables young people's needs to met, comprehensively. When young people were asked about their personal experiences. One young person said, 'well there's lots of boundaries here, which are there to help us...they teach us and give us independence and trust. They help us to become a better person and they help us to make the right decisions.'

Young people receive excellent support from staff, to enable them to become better individuals. Young people are taught to be considerate and respectful towards others. One incident was observed where staff were extremely supportive of a young person and their family by supporting them through a minor crisis, whilst on contact.

All young people attend school and there are structured plans in place to support

them. Staff have high expectations about education, which young people respond towards positively. Young people are actively supported in school to enable them to achieve their true potential.

Young people are very well supported as learners, with education actively promoted for them. Young people are extensively supported to learn and achieve, and become confident and capable learners.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's placement plans are completed comprehensively and their needs as individuals are well recorded. Plans are written clearly, with detailed information available which enables staff to provide young people with high quality care. Plans are individualised and cover young people's full range of needs.

Young people's needs are regularly reviewed and statutory reviews take place within the recommended timescales. Young people are well assisted and supported to make a positive contribution. They are actively involved in decisions so they are able to voice their opinions or concerns. The quality of young people's care is excellent and young people thrive and make real progress. They receive extensive support from a highly dedicated and very capable staff team.

Consultation with young people is thoughtful and purposeful. Young people are actively engaged in consultation in a way which enables them to share their views and collective experiences, with staff. Regular opportunities are provided for young people to be consulted, through key working, one-to-one meetings and resident group meetings. Young people are strongly encouraged to articulate their views and wishes, so they are able to influence any decisions made in respect of their care.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The home provides young people with high quality living accommodation. Young people are provided with their own bedrooms which are very well decorated, furnished and individually personalised. The use of soft furnishings within the home creates a warm, welcoming and very homely atmosphere.

The home provides young people with a nurturing environment, where the accommodation provided for young people is positively valued and respected by them. Communal living areas are spacious and comfortable. Rooms are very well equipped with games, books and suitable reading materials.

Externally, the home is not distinguishable as a children's home. The home benefits from good access to local places of interest and it is located close to community facilities, making these easily accessible. The gardens of the home are well

maintained and provide young people with a safe place to enjoy their leisure activities, such as, football, basketball and badminton.

Young people learn to be independent in accordance with their needs and assessed levels of ability. Staff identify what types of support young people need and they provide extensive support, to help young people develop their self confidence and skills. None of the young people currently, are of an age, where they are ready or required, to formally prepare for independent living.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The home has a written Statement of Purpose and a children's guide. Combined both documents provide an accurate account of the services provided by the home. Both documents are informative and useful.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The staff composition is diverse and staff act as positive role models by helping shape young people's values, morals, beliefs and attitudes. Young people are treated as unique individuals and they receive fair and equal treatment within the home. All of the young people have access to and benefit from, the same equality of opportunity.

Good opportunities exist for staff training and development. This enables staff to develop their knowledge and skills. There are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced staff, to meet the needs and numbers of those resident. A high percentage of staff hold a recognised qualification in social care and the staff team are very well trained and qualified. The current achievement rate of staff qualified at National Vocational Qualification standards, exceeds the specified requirement.

Young people are cared for by the same staff and they receive continuity of care. This enables them to form and develop trusting relationships. Impressive relationships between young people and staff, underpin many of the positive features about this home.

The provisions made for reviewing the quality of care are undertaken at suitable intervals. Independent monitoring visits are conducted in accordance with the home's statutory responsibilities. The manager of the home routinely checks the home's administrative systems to ensure that what staff do, they do exceptionally well. However, evaluation within the reports could be improved to show, what issues, if any, have been identified or rectified.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure staff records kept within the home include all of the requirements specified within Schedule 2 (NMS 27.1)
- ensure managerial monitoring includes evaluation by identifying any issues, patterns or trends. (NMS 33.2)